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AUTHOR Plato, Kathleen C.
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ABSTRACT

Chapter 2 of the Elementary and Secondary School Improvement Amendments directs that at least 80% of funds targeted under the law be delivered to school districts, while up to 20% may be reserved for statewide use. In 1989, the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction in Olympia (Washington) redirected this 20% to support a competitive grants program to reward local innovation in programs with statewide significance. Policy shifts and program direction during the selection process for these projects are described. Applications were reviewed by three readers looking for innovation and for significance beyond the local impact. Many factors of program delivery and finance were considered. A final factor was the requirement that a certain minimum be in special areas such as effective schools. The first 25 projects of statewide significance were selected for implementation in spring 1990. Some of the projects highlighted include: (1) alternative methods of credit accumulation; (2) an interdisciplinary curriculum development project for at-risk youth; (3) music education curricula; (4) transition from middle school to high school; (5) use of multimedia technology in cooperative learning and critical thinking; (6) total child student management programs; and (7) educational materials related to a museum collection. Twenty-five projects and their award amounts are listed. (SLD)

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FEDERAL, STATE AND LOCAL COLLABORATION FOR EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS: CHAPTER 2 "20%" INNOVATIVE PROJECTS OF STATEWIDE SIGNIFICANCE

Dr. Kathleen C. Plato
Policy Research & Planning
Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction

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Federal, State and Local Collaboration for Effective Schools:

Chapter 2 "20%" Innovative Projects of Statewide Significance

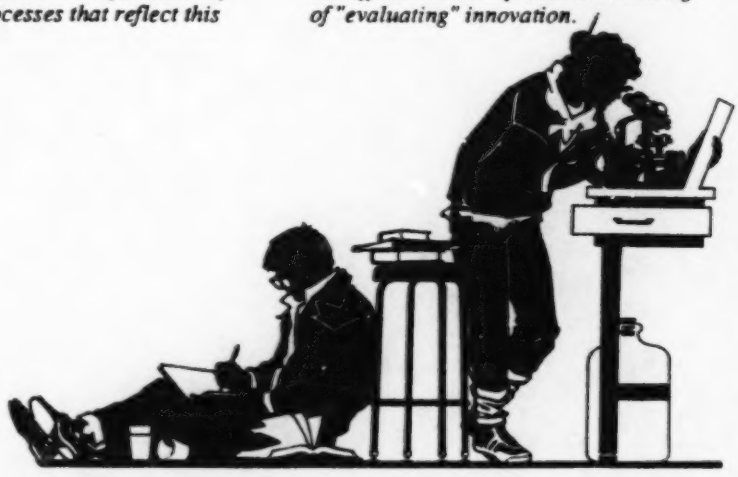
Dr. Kathleen C. Plato, Administrative Assistant
Policy Research and Planning, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction

Innovation. Restructuring. Fundamental changes in teaching and learning. These words are frequently used to describe the education change process of the 1990's.

The movement is fast paced, hitting schools from two distinct directions (Wise, 1988). Under the banner of reform, state legislatures, governors and national leaders are calling for higher standards, more accountability, massive curriculum revision and technology education through a "top down model." Meanwhile, many experts insist that real change in the classroom will only take place if ideas come from "the bottom up." Site-based management, outcome based education, shared decision making and teacher empowerment are just some of the popular processes that reflect this point of view.

*Are there links between these seemingly opposing forces? Can educators and administrators define ways to channel federal, state and local resources toward meaningful education change through collaborative, efforts? I think so and an example of such an experiment exists right here in Washington state. Through the re-directed use of Chapter 2 "20%" dollars which support **locally** developed projects of **statewide** significance using **federal** and other funds, collaborative, meaningful education change is taking place **now**.*

This article describes the policy shifts, program direction and first round projects that have come about through this effort. It also expands the challenge of "evaluating" innovation.



Background

The federal law known as the Elementary and Secondary School Improvement Amendments (ESSIA) has a Chapter 2, which authorizes federal funds to be used by state and local education agencies for six "targeted assistance areas." The areas include:

- programs for at-risk students;
- supplemental learning resources;
- effective schools projects;
- professional development;
- programs to enhance personal excellence and achievement; and
- innovative projects to enhance school climate.

The law directs that at least "80%" of these funds be delivered to school districts by formula and that up to "20%" may be reserved for statewide use. From its initiation up until 1988, Washington state used the "20%" solely at the state education agency level. In 1989, Superintendent of Public Instruction Judith Billings, redirected the use of the "20%" to support a competitive grants program to reward local innovation. A Chapter 2 "20%" project, however, was defined as a project which was considered not only a good local idea, but one which also had "statewide significance"--a way to have an effect on Washington students beyond the geographic boundaries of the grant recipient.

Late in the fall of 1989, the first call for proposals under this new program direction generated 125 proposals in a short, six-week application period. From these, the first 25 projects of statewide significance were selected for implementation during spring 1990.

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Evaluating Innovation and Statewide Significance

Before the program could get started, a number of questions needed to be answered. What is statewide significance? What constitutes innovation? How do you evaluate and select "innovative" programs for funding through a competitive process? What kind of application should be required when one of the original purposes of Chapter 2 was "to reduce the burden of paperwork on local education agencies?" Since application could be made by higher education institutions, non-profit agencies, libraries, museums, as well as school districts (traditional applicants), how could these diverse applications be compared? SIRS readers might be interested to know that the answers to many of these questions were drawn from the current research base in education.

In the spirit of the law, application was kept simple: a ten-page, free form paper outlining the project, plus a federal budget form. The limited number of pages allowed inexperienced grant writers in schools to compete with organizations that had developed sophisticated grant writing "systems."

The applications were holistically reviewed by three readers using a form that recorded characteristics of innovative programs as noted in the literature. For example, a report for The Center for Policy Research in Education, titled "Improving Inner-City Schools: Current Directions in Urban District Reform," (Oakes, 1988) suggests that in order for schools to be effective in serving at-risk youth, coordination with other institutions and agencies to provide social and economic opportunities beyond the reach of the school is a necessity. This research-based characteristic was translated to items which the readers looked for in reviewing the application such as an interagency, "total child," approach to service and "new partnerships for education improvement and excellence."

The power of the interdisciplinary approach is documented in **Interdisciplinary Curriculum: Design and Implementation** (Jacobs, 1989), suggesting that integrated learning holds the interest of students and promotes

critical thinking. Thus, the identification of an "interdisciplinary approach," within the project scored points.

Many authors suggested "restructuring"—a rethinking of the structure of school, specifically how schools are organized and administered. Projects with plans for unique instructional delivery systems that produced meaningful change received points.

Given the federal restrictions as well as Congressional intent of the program, other factors had to be considered in the selection of projects: appropriate use of computers and hardware, full funding of existing or required programs (supplanting), excessive dollar requests without adequate justification and many other factors.

It was not expected that funded projects would exhibit all of the characteristics of a well-written, innovative project of statewide

How do you evaluate and select "innovative" programs for funding through a competitive process?

significance. Although characteristics were not weighed, grant reviewers had some degree of variance to observe. If a characteristic was identified, it received a "1," if the project was exemplary in the manner to which the characteristic was exhibited, raters could give that characteristic a "2." While far from perfect, the process allowed very diverse applications for innovative projects to be placed on a continuum with a large degree of spread. A grants manager's nightmare occurs—when using Likert scale ratings and averaged reader ratings—all projects fall into the same middle range!

A final factor in the selection process was that the law required a certain minimum number of projects in special areas such as "effective schools," and that the State Superintendent directed first round projects, as a group, to represent all targeted assistance areas, the state geographic diversity, large and small school districts, and a few non-traditional applicants as allowed by law. The challenge was great, but the final package of projects in the first round of the new Chapter 2 "20%" program showed how creative local Washington state educators and others interested in supporting quality education can be.

Project highlights:

- Alternative methods of credit accumulation are being successfully used with potential drop-outs by the **Portable Assisted Study Sequence Program (PASS)** administered through the **Prosser School District.** First developed for migrant students, this system is showing great success with non-migrant, mobile secondary students.

- **Wellpinit School District** is using the theme of "Salmon, Our Past, Our Future," for an academic achievement/interdisciplinary curriculum development project for at-risk Indian youth.

- The **Washington Music Educators Association,** working with **ESD 112,** has advanced a new music education curricula utilizing Midi technology and a trainer of trainers model through the Chapter 2 "20%" grant.

- The needs of at-risk youth at the crucial transition from middle to high school is being addressed in two very different service models at the **Bellingham** and **Yelm School Districts.**

- The focus of the **Shoreline School District** Chapter 2 "20%" project is the use of multi-media technology to foster student interdisciplinary projects and advance critical thinking skills through cooperative learning.

- Two "total child" case student management pilots are being supported in **Ocean Beach School District** and in the **Pasco School District** with assistance from the **University of Washington's** Center for the Study of At-Risk Students.

- Seattle's **Museum of Flight,** which hosts thousands of the state's school children and teachers, is planning the development of interdisciplinary education materials related to its collection.

These are a few of the projects which may be of interest to "20%" Washington educators across the state. Given that the grant recipients are required to support dissemination of information and/or materials developed through this funding, each has a contact person and a product of their work. A complete listing of 1989/90 programs follows.

For more information on Washington State's Chapter 2 Projects of Statewide Significance, please contact:

Dr. Kathleen Plato
Policy Research and Planning, OSPI,
Old Capitol Building
Mail Stop FG-11
Olympia, WA 98504.

References

Wise, A. (1988). "The Two Conflicting Trends in School Reform: Legislative Learning Revisited." *Phi Delta Kappan* 69, 5:328-333.

Oakes, J. (1988). *Improving Inner-City Schools: Current Directions in Urban District Reform,* Center for Policy Research in Education, Rutgers University, Brunswick, New Jersey.

Jacobs, H. (1989). *Interdisciplinary Curriculum: Design and Implementation,* Association for the Supervision of Curriculum and Development, Alexandria, Virginia.

Chapter 2
1989/90
Innovative
Programs

Bellingham School District
$35,500
Connections Project
Objective: Assisting at-risk students in the transition from middle to high school, dropout prevention.
Product: Model development and project report
Contact: Lisa Bjork, (206) 676-6481

Burlington-Edison School District
$34,618
Service-Learning Initiative
Objective: School improvement, civic responsibility through student volunteer projects.
Product: State Service Learning Center, model programs information and statewide in-service.
Contact: Don Zorn, (206) 757-3311

Central Kitsap School District
$45,640
CLIMB Program
Objective: School improvement through restructuring using effective school research.
Product: Restructuring model and project report.
Contact: Ron Gillespie, (206) 692-3135

Chehalis School District
$14,665
Integration of Technology for "At-Risk" Students
Objective: Development of higher order thinking skills through integrated social studies, business and language arts core subjects for at-risk secondary students.
Product: Model and project report.
Contact: Larry Parsons, (206) 748-0273

Colton School District
$34,950
Out from Behind Closed Doors
Objective: Network computers for student achievement and staff development. Development of communications model and teacher training.
Product: Guide for schools on how to network, given local consideration and hardware.
Contact: Mike Johnson, (509) 229-3385

Educational Service District 101 (on behalf of all ESD Media Directors)
$44,958
Geography in American History
Objective: Improvement of student achievement in social studies via videocassette series--statewide availability.
Product: Materials acquisition, distribution and project report.
Contact: Clinton Kruiswyk, (206) 545-6195

Educational Service District 112
$11,111
Living Resource Bank
Business/Education Partnership Cooperative
Objective: Coordination of education, industry and business for K-12 school improvement.
Product: Coordination model and project report.
Contact: Kathy Rohrer, (206) 574-2871

Highline School District
$29,200
Effective Schools through Outcome Based Education
Objective: Fostering comprehensive school change and long-range planning via outcome based education.
Product: Network and database development and trainer of trainers component.
Contact: Wayne Foley, (206) 433-0111

KCTS-9 Public Television
$25,785
Learning Links
Objective: Computer-based statewide network linking teachers and students to public television programming and educational resources.
Product: System expansion, electronic mail, program evaluation report and training.
Contact: Sharon Babcock, (206) 443-6781

Kettle Falls School District
$36,095
Small Schools Library/Media Center for the 21st Century
Objective: Development of student higher order thinking skills through information accessing and use of technology.
Product: Model description and project report.
Contact: Tim Durnell, (509) 738-6388

Museum of Flight
$10,000
Hanger Project Enhancement
Objective: Development of interdisciplinary educational materials and teacher guides related to Museum's Hanger Exhibit.
Product: Plan for development.
Contact: Howard C. Lovering, (206) 764-5700

North Thurston School District
$27,379
Summer Enrichment Institute
Objective: Extended year program for at-risk early childhood age students.
Product: Restructuring model and project report.
Contact: Pete Kerl, (206) 456-7769

Ocean Beach School District
$19,800
Coordinated Service Initiative
Objective: Success for at-risk students through case study management approach.
Product: Model development and project report.
Contact: Gil Johnson, (206) 642-3739

Prosser School District
$75,731
Portable Assisted Study Sequence Program (PASS)
Objective: Alternative method of credit accumulation for at-risk students throughout the state.
Product: Course material and project report.
Contact: Mary Kernel, (509) 786-3391

Seattle School District
$66,356
African Cultures Project
Objective: Development and pilot of interdisciplinary curricula on African culture.
Product: Transportable curricula of classes, field trips, workshops and other material and project report.
Contact: Carole Williams, (206) 281-6340

Shoreline School District
$30,294
Multi-Media Interdisciplinary Approach
Objective: Teacher training and use of multi-media technology to foster student interdisciplinary projects.
Products: Demonstration site, multi-media applications and a project report.
Contact: Al Morasch, (206) 361-4229

South Kitsap School District
$52,000
Cedar Heights Restructuring Project
Objective: Effective schools and restructuring effort to include extended day, mentor program and curriculum revision for school with large at-risk population.
Product: Project video and restructuring model.
Contact: Jim Whitford, (206) 876-7323

Tenino School District
$15,000
Technology Education
Objective: Bridging the gap between academic skills and applied work skills via technology education curriculum.
Product: Demonstration site and project report.
Contact: Marc S. Spiegelberg, (206) 264-2663

United Indians of All Tribes
$89,500
Academic and Cultural Excellence
Objective: Multi-faceted educational support for Native American children and youth. Emphasis on suicide prevention, drug awareness, self-esteem and cultural identity.
Product: Curriculum/teacher's guide and project video.
Contact: Bernie Whitebear, (206) 285-4425

University of Washington/C-STARS
$50,100
Case Management Demonstration
Objective: Success for at-risk students through case study management/whole child approach.
Product: Model development and project report.
Contact: Albert J. Smith, (206) 543-3815

Vancouver School District
$21,760
K-12 Sequential Dance Education
Objective: Development of performing arts (sequential dance/physical education curricula).
Product: Sequential dance/physical education curriculum guide and project report.
Contact: Deborah Brzoska, (206) 556-7143

Washington Music Educators Association
$60,615
Music and Technology
Objective: Development of music education curricula utilizing Midi technology.
Product: Preview center at ESD's, publication listing available resources and trainer of trainers component.
Contact: Wayne Timmerman, (206) 753-8831

Washington State Social Studies Council
$83,950
Advancement of Social Studies through Technology
Objective: Enhancement of teaching and learning of social studies through technology.
Product: Model of innovative middle/high school social studies program, trainer of trainers component.
Contact: Larry Strickland, (206) 753-6747

Wellpinit School District
$25,000
Salmon: Our Past, Our Future
Objective: Academic achievement for at-risk youth through culturally relevant, interdisciplinary curriculum.
Product: Curriculum guide and project report.
Contact: Roger Hauge, (509) 258-4291

Yelm Community Schools
$28,750
Secondary Connections
Objective: Assisting at-risk youth with transition from middle to high school; dropout prevention.
Product: Model and project report.
Contact: Jerry House, (206) 458-3600